

*****S E C R E T*****

DATE 04/01/80

WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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WHSR COMMENT:

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 EOBIBLOOM, THORN, PASTOR, KIM, OPLIN, HUB

MESSAGE ANNOTATIONS:

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MESSAGE:

IMMEDIATE
 DE RUEBBA #2604/1 080214B
 O 202134Z MAR 80
 FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACI IMMEDIATE 4797

~~S E C R E T~~ SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 2604
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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR SMITH
 E.O. 120651 XDS-1 (3/26/18) (SMITH, GERARD)
 TAGS: ENRG
 SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF MY VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES

1. (8) ENTIRE TEXT

2. CONDITIONS FOR OUR VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES WERE NOT
 AUSPICIOUS. WHILE WE HELD TALKS WITH THE PRESIDENT
 OF ARGENTINA'S NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY CASTRO MADERO,
 HIS DEPUTY WAS IN MOSCOW AT THE SOVIET'S INVITATION.
 A HIGH-LEVEL GERMAN DELEGATION, HEADED BY VAN WELL,
 WAS ALSO HERE TO COMPLETE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE ATUCHA
 II REACTOR. DURING OUR TALKS WITH VIDELA, PASTOR,
 MARTINEZ DE HOZ, GALTIERI AND VIOLA WE STRESSED THE
 SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE VIEW THE INTERNATIONAL
 SITUATION, THAT THERE WILL BE NO "LURCH TOWARDS DETENTE,"
 AND OUR AIM TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA.

3. THERE CLEARLY REMAIN DEEP DIFFERENCES ON MAJOR
 ISSUES FROM NON-PROLIFERATION TO CENTRAL AMERICAN
 STRATEGY. SOME OF THE EXPECTATIONS OF GOODWILL
 CREATED BY THE GOODPASTER MISSION WERE DISSIPATED BY
 THE CLASHES AT THE UNHRC MEETING IN GENEVA, WHICH
 WERE FULLY REPORTED IN THE BUENOS AIRES PRESS. BUT
 I BELIEVE ARGENTINA'S LEADERS -- CONSCIOUS THAT RELA-
 TIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE NEVER BEEN EASY --
 ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN IMPROVING RELATIONS ON THEIR

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP
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MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

TERMS. THEY STRESSED AGAIN, AS THEY HAD TO ANDY GOODPASTER, THAT WHILE THEY HAVE PRAGMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS AND THE THIRD WORLD, THEY CONSIDER ARGENTINA PART OF THE WEST. THEY CONSIDER SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT ON MILITARY RELATIONS AND OUR ATTITUDE IN THE DAS ON THE IAHRC'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT IMPORTANT TESTS OF WHETHER WE SHARE THEIR DESIRE FOR COOPERATION. MY PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS ARE:

A) WE SHOULD CONTINUE THE EFFORT TO REBUILD THE RELATIONSHIP. ARGENTINA'S HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION HAS IMPROVED OVER THE PAST YEAR -- MORE SO THAN THEY ARE INTERNATIONALLY BEING GIVEN CREDIT FOR. ARGENTINA IS AN IMPORTANT NATION, WITH CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE ON MAJOR US INTERESTS, AND ONE WITH WHICH WE SHOULD HAVE DECENT WORKING RELATIONS.
B) HUMAN RIGHTS. OUR POLICIES SHOULD BE BASED ON CURRENT PERFORMANCE, NOT THE GRIM RECORD OF THE PAST. WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH CURRENT SECURITY PRACTICES, THE CURRENT QUALITY OF JUDICIAL PROCEDURES, AND THE OPENNESS OF THE EMERGING POLITICAL DIALOGUE. BUT I QUESTION WHETHER AN ACCOUNTING OF THE FATE OF THE THOUSANDS OF DISAPPEARANCES IS A REALISTIC OBJECTIVE AT THIS TIME; WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO URGE MOVES ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, BUT WITHOUT MAKING OUR RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA HOSTAGE TO THIS ISSUE. (NO MAJOR ARGENTINE POLITICIAN SEEKS SUCH AN ACCOUNTING.)

C) POLITICAL EVOLUTION. MOST OF ARGENTINA'S MILITARY LEADERSHIP WISHES TO RETURN ARGENTINA TO ITS DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS -- IN A MANNER THAT WOULD AVOID PAST PATTERNS OF CHRONIC INSTABILITY. BUT WHILE PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT IN THE SECURITY OF THE PERSON CAN BE EXPECTED, THE INSTALLATION OF AN EFFECTIVE DEMOCRATIC CIVILIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM WILL BE A MATTER OF YEARS. TOO MUCH OF THE COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY PERONISM AND ITS AFTERMATH. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT PRESSURE AND SANCTIONS WILL ACCELERATE THIS PROCESS.

D) NON-PROLIFERATION. THERE WAS NO ENCOURAGEMENT DURING MY TALKS THAT ARGENTINA WILL RATIFY TLAELOLCO ANY TIME, SOON; ON FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS WE AGREED TO DISAGREE. ARGENTINA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM IS WELL ADVANCED AND WILL MOVE AHEAD UNDER ABLE LEADERSHIP. OUR CENTRAL OBJECTIVE, MUST BE TO PREVENT THE EMERGENCE OF A NUCLEAR ARMS RACE IN THE HEMISPHERE. THE ARGENTINE LEADERSHIP MAY BE ON THE THRESHOLD OF CONCERN OVER GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROLIFERATION AND MAY BE INTER-

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MESSAGE (CONTINUED):

ESTED IN A DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL SOLUTION. THEIR NEW
COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WITH BRAZIL OFFER HOPE OF
FOSTERING MUTUAL RESTRAINT AND CONFIDENCE BETWEEN THESE
TWO COUNTRIES AND MERIT OUR SUPPORT.

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4798

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 2604

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E) BILATERAL NUCLEAR COOPERATION. FOR THE PRESENT? THE ARGENTINES DO NOT APPEAR INTERESTED IN COOPERATION BEYOND THE SUPPLY OF FUEL FOR THEIR RESEARCH REACTORS, TO WHICH WE ARE COMMITTED. WE SHOULD, HOWEVER, MAINTAIN REMAINING LINKS TO THEIR NUCLEAR PROGRAM BY RESOLVING THE RELATED SAFEGUARDS ISSUE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF US LAW. I THINK WE CAN SOLVE THE ISSUE ON THAT BASIS.

F) OLYMPICS AND GRAINS EMBARGO. THERE IS A REASONABLE POSSIBILITY THAT THE ARGENTINES ULTIMATELY WILL WITHDRAW FROM THE MOSCOW GAMES, AND THEY COULD HELP SWING THE OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. WE SHOULD KEEP THEM CURRENTLY INFORMED ABOUT OUR COUNT OF THE NUMBER OF PROSPECTIVE NON-PARTICIPANTS. ON GRAINS, I SEE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR ACCUSING THEM OF HAVING UNDERCUT THE GOODPASTER UNDERSTANDING. THEY HAVE A CASE THAT WE HAVE UNDERBOLD THEM IN THEIR TRADITIONAL MARKETS. THE GRAIN THEY NOW HAVE AVAILABLE FOR EXPORT HAS BEEN SEVERELY REDUCED BY DROUGHT AND THUS THEY NO LONGER HAVE FUTURE ABILITY TO AFFECT A MAJOR PART OF OUR EMBARGO.

G) CENTRAL AMERICA. THE ARGENTINE LEADERSHIP IS DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER DEVELOPMENTS IN THAT REGION. THEY HAVE DECIDED TO FOCUS THEIR SUPPORT ON GUATEMALA AND HONDURAS, AND ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS IN NICARAGUA AND EL SALVADOR.

H) RELATIONS WIT THE SOVIETS. THE SOVIETS CONTINUE TO PROBE FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND COOPERATION. THEY HAVE BECOME ONE OF ARGENTINA'S LARGER TRADING PARTNERS IN RECENT YEARS, COOPERATE WITH ARGENTINA IN THE UN, AND NOW PROBE ARGENTINE INTEREST IN MILITARY SALES AND NUCLEAR COOPERATION. THIS SHOULD BE A MATTER OF REAL CONCERN TO US.

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MESSAGE (CONTINUED):

IN SUMMARY, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD CONTINUE CLOSE CONSULTATIONS ON SUCH MATTERS AS CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE FORTH-COMING IAHRC REPORT. I ALSO RECOMMEND THAT WE PROCEED WITH AN INVITATION TO THE ARMY CHIEF-OF-STAFF, GENERAL VAGUERO, SOMETIME THIS SUMMER, IF DEVELOPMENTS WITH RESPECT TO ARGENTINA CONTINUE FAVORABLE. THERE IS MERIT IN ECONOMIC TALKS, WHICH WE UNDERSTAND ARE SCHEDULED FOR LATER THIS YEAR, AND IN PERMITTING THE PURCHASE OF SUCH TECHNICAL SERVICES UNDER AID'S REIMBURSABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AS THEY MIGHT FIND OF INTEREST, OR THE PROGRAM OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION WORKED OUT BETWEEN USDA AND THE ARGENTINE SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE TOLD THEM THAT WE SEE NO POSSIBILITY OF CHANGING OUR VOTE IN THE IPI'S OR LIFTING THE PROHIBITION ON MILITARY SALES AND TRAINING UNTIL THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE AND IMAGE FURTHER IMPROVES. DIALOGUE SHOULD BE CONTINUED ON POLITICAL APPROACHES TO GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROLIFERATION PROBLEMS, CASTRO

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